

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in this application:

Listing of claims

1. (Currently amended) Process for the preparation of a quasi-crystalline boehmite comprising the steps of:
 - a) preparing an aqueous precursor mixture comprising a water-insoluble aluminium source,
 - b) decreasing the pH of the precursor mixture of step a) by at least 2 units,
 - c) increasing the pH of the mixture of step b) by at least 2 units, such that the pH of the mixture is at least 10, and
 - d) aging the mixture of step c) under hydrothermal conditions to form the quasi-crystalline boehmite.
2. (Original) A process according to claim 1 wherein the pH in step b) is decreased to a value below 7.
3. (Original) A process according to claim 2 wherein the pH in step b) is decreased to a value below 5.
4. (Original) A process according to claim 3 wherein the pH in step b) is decreased to a value below 3.
5. (Cancelled)
6. (Cancelled)
7. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1 wherein the water-insoluble aluminium source is selected from the group consisting of aluminium trihydrate, thermally treated aluminium trihydrate, aluminium sol, aluminium gel, and mixtures thereof.
8. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 7 wherein the water-insoluble aluminium source is milled, either prior to its addition to the precursor mixture or when present in the precursor mixture.
9. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1 further comprising shaping the formed quasi-crystalline boehmite into shaped bodies.

10. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1 wherein additives are added either before or during step d).
11. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1 wherein the process is conducted in a continuous mode in one or more vessels.
12. (Original) A process according to claim 11 wherein the process is conducted in at least two vessels.
13. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 11 wherein the total average residence time in all vessels together is between 20 and 120 minutes.
14. (Previously Presented) A quasi-crystalline boehmite obtainable by the process of claim 1.
15. (Original) A quasi-crystalline boehmite according to claim 14 having a Z-average submicron particle size, as measured with quasi-electron light scattering, of less than 500 nm.
16. (Original) A quasi-crystalline boehmite according to claim 15 wherein the Z-average submicron particle size is less than 300 nm.
17. (Original) A quasi-crystalline boehmite according to claim 16 wherein the Z-average submicron particle size is less than 200 nm.
18. (Original) A quasi-crystalline boehmite according to claim 17 wherein the Z-average submicron particle size is less than 100 nm.